

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 004926

SIPDIS

STATE PASS AIT/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/20/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: SURPRISE DPP LEGISLATIVE ATTACK MOVES DEFENSE
SPECIAL BUDGET TO LY FLOOR, ANGERS PAN-BLUE OPPOSITION

REF: A. TAIPEI 4415

[B](#). TAIPEI 3551

[C](#). TAIPEI 4920

Classified By: AIT Director Douglas H. Paal, Reason(s):
1.4 (B/D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. The ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) took advantage of a temporary majority in the Legislative Yuan (LY) on December 20 to put the Defense Procurement Special Budget on the LY agenda after sixteen months of gridlock. Opposition Pan-Blue parties reacted in shock and anger, calling the vote illegal and pledging to reverse it in the LY plenary session on Friday, December 23. This may prove to be a "Pyrrhic Victory" for the DPP and, by angering the Pan-Blue opposition, set back recent signs of possible compromise on the Defense Special Budget. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) In a legislative "surprise attack," DPP legislators attending the weekly Tuesday meeting of the LY Procedural Committee on December 20 outvoted the handful of KMT legislators present to put the Defense Special Budget on the LY agenda. The committee had voted the bill down 41 straight times over the past sixteen months. According to LY regulations (see Refs A,B), the Special Budget bill now moves to the LY floor, where it will undergo a pro forma "First Reading" at the plenary session on Friday, December 23, and then be referred to the LY Defense Committee for consideration.

[1](#)3. (C) DPP legislator and LY Defense Committee member Shen Fa-hui told AIT that DPP legislator William Lai (Ching-te), who was serving in the DPP's turn as committee Chairman, suddenly moved for a vote at a time when most DPP and few opposition Pan-Blue legislators were in their seats. The whole meeting, he said, lasted about ten minutes. Shen insisted to AIT that the move had not been planned by the DPP but, rather, was Lai's own spontaneous idea.

[1](#)4. (C) Opposition Pan-Blue parties reacted angrily to the DPP move. KMT caucus whip Tseng Yung-chuan charged that Lai had abused his power as Chairman, refusing opposition legislators an opportunity to discuss the proposal. The vote, he told the press, was invalid. PFP caucus leader Daniel Huang criticized the DPP as "childish" and the "surprise attack" as meaningless because it would be "reversed" by the opposition at the Friday LY plenary session. KMT legislator Su Chi told AIT that the move could prove counterproductive, angering the Pan-Blue opposition and undermining recent prospects for compromise. The KMT Party Caucus, he noted, issued a "No. 1" alert shortly after the Procedural Committee vote instructing all KMT members to attend the Friday LY plenary session to reverse the vote.

[1](#)5. (C) A disturbed Shen Fa-hui told AIT without great conviction that he hoped the episode might prove to be "an opportunity" for a resolution of the long-standing Special Budget stalemate. It could, he surmised hopefully, provide a venue for the two sides to work together if the DPP could engage the Pan-Blue, particularly KMT Chairman Ma Ying-jeou, over the two days before Friday's plenary session. He acknowledged, however, that the chances of this happening are "very small."

[1](#)6. (C) Comment. This DPP surprise attack will not move the Defense Special Budget closer to passage by the LY, but rather may actually complicate the recent signs (Ref C) that the two sides want to appear willing to reach a compromise. As such it could prove a "Pyrrhic Victory" for the DPP and the Defense Special Budget.

PAAL